



## Preface

On March 11, 2004, sixty-four men and women including university presidents, professors, and administrators; performing arts presenters, artists, and representatives from government, business, nonprofit organizations, and the media gathered at Arden House in Harriman, N.Y. for the 104th American Assembly entitled “The Creative Campus: The Training, Sustaining, and Presenting of the Performing Arts in American Higher Education.” During the course of the meeting the participants met in intensive, structured discussions. Following their sessions, participants reviewed an outline of this report, which was then expanded into this full report.

Over the past four decades, The American Assembly has sponsored projects on many aspects of the arts, both the plastic and the performing arts. Inspired, in part, by the public positions of Lee C. Bollinger, president of Columbia University and Nancy Cantor, chancellor of University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, who both graciously agreed to serve as project co-chairs, The Assembly decided to focus this project exclusively on the performing arts and their role with higher education. The Assembly recognizes that together, higher education and the performing arts share a broad range of mutually supportive activities through which they enrich each other, and that they have specific opportunities and roles to play in nurturing a vital and thriving modern culture. It is this project’s intent to explore this crucial relationship and how at every level and in every location, America’s colleges and universities offer resources for the training, sustaining, and presenting of the performing arts.

This project was directed by Alberta Arthurs, former director of Arts and Humanities at The Rockefeller Foundation and principal, Arthurs.US, and Sandra Gibson, president and CEO, Association of Performing Arts Presenters. The project was also ably assisted by a steering committee of distinguished leaders from around the country, whose names and affiliations are listed in the appendix to this report.

In preparation for the meeting, a volume of background material was compiled and commissioned by The Assembly and sent to the participants in advance of their meeting. The list of readings and the authors and their affiliations is also in the appendix. Copies of these working drafts are available upon request from The American Assembly.

During the Assembly, participants heard formal addresses by Lee C. Bollinger and Nancy Cantor. Both addresses were filmed by the firm Streaming Culture and can be viewed on The Assembly’s website, [www.americanassembly.org](http://www.americanassembly.org). A panel addressing “Resources: The Academy and the Arts” was moderated by Ms. Arthurs with discussants Barry P. Scherr, provost, Dartmouth College; Sekou Sundiata, artist, Dance and Be Still Arts; and Steven Tepper, deputy director and lecturer, Princeton University Center for Arts & Cultural Policy Studies. Following her address, Chancellor Cantor led a conversation among Lawrence J. Simpson, president, Eastern Campus, Cuyahoga Community College; Lawrence J. Tamburri, president, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; and Shirley M. Tilghman, president, Princeton University.

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The American Assembly takes no positions on any subjects presented here for public discussion. In addition, it should be noted that participants took part in this meeting as individuals and spoke for themselves rather than for their affiliated organizations and institutions.

We would like to acknowledge and express special gratitude to the project co-directors, Alberta Arthurs and Sandra Gibson, and for the fine work of the discussion leaders and rapporteurs, who guided the participants in the sessions and helped to prepare the outline of this report: Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, Cora Mirikitani, Steve Lavine, Mike Ross, Andrew Taylor, and Steven Tepper.

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## **THE CREATIVE CAMPUS: THE TRAINING, SUSTAINING, AND PRESENTING OF THE PERFORMING ARTS IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION**

At the close of their discussions, the participants in the 104<sup>th</sup> American Assembly on “The Creative Campus: The Training, Sustaining, and Presenting of the Performing Arts in American Higher Education” at Arden House in Harriman, New York, March 11-13, 2004 reviewed as a group an outline of this statement. While not everything that follows was endorsed by everyone, this reflects the general discussions of the group.

### **OVERVIEW**

During the convening of the American Assembly, the broad and public roles of higher education in society, and the parallel roles of the performing arts, were described in a number of ways. Among them:

“...to make discoveries that change lives and to prepare better citizens...” Nancy Cantor

“...(to) nurture a vital and thriving modern culture...” Lee C. Bollinger

to open “...experience-oriented imaginative space...” Barbara White

Throughout “the Creative Campus,” the 104<sup>th</sup> American Assembly, all of its participants identified and analyzed the multiple ways in which the academy and the arts relate to and reinforce each other. Higher education and the arts are two powerful, historically embedded, endlessly re-invented sectors in American life. They coincide in the society as major arenas for education, experience and knowledge-building. They coincide as major nonprofit actors in American life; they coincide as builders, as makers, as shapers of society’s values. They live together on campuses and in communities. As the Assembly participants asserted--and illustrated with example--the real wonder is that higher education and the arts have persisted, in parallel and in partnership, all these years, in so many places, without articulating their relationship or taking full advantage of it. It was the precise aim of this Assembly to make plain the relationships between America’s colleges and universities and the performing arts.

Assembly participants focused on the unheralded fact that American colleges and universities are amongst the greatest patrons of the arts in the United States. Without colleges and universities, artists would have fewer places to perform, fewer opportunities for employment, and greatly curtailed ways to engage their audiences. If the academy did not support the arts, the activity of entire performance forms – dance, theater, music, and others – would wither or would be available only to those in areas of the country with the wealth and density to support them. Without their home in higher education, the performing arts could not live.

It is with this sense of discovery, with a shared commitment to developing the relationship between the arts and the academy, that this American Assembly conducted itself. There are many, many avenues of exploration, many ways to address the relationship. This Assembly explored only three areas of partnership, or parallel activity, between higher education and the arts, called - for the purposes of discussion - “sustaining, training, and presenting the performing arts” in American colleges and universities. Even within those three areas of concern, Assembly participants realized that their work represents only a partial examination of the Creative Campus. It is, however, a promising beginning for the discussions that—hopefully--will follow.

In so many ways, the synergy between higher education and the performing arts has been ideal. In American colleges and universities, the performing arts – music, theater, dance and other forms – have grown and flourished. Higher education institutions have housed and nurtured performing artists, audiences, artistic works and arts scholarship for over a hundred years. In turn, as became clear in the Assembly discussions, the arts on campus have sustained in profound ways the academy’s deep-seated, tripartite mission – to provide research, education and service to society. These purposes mesh in the academy and in the arts in the following ways:

*Research/Creative Activity.* Colleges and universities support scholars and teachers who explore, advance, combine and convey knowledge through a broad range of disciplines, applying many “ways of knowing” to create the store of information, analysis and ideas that society draws on. Colleges and universities are also stewards of this knowledge, maintaining it in libraries, museums and other repositories. In the arts, the creative processes of developing and presenting works are parallel to the creation/production of scholarly work. Artistic work constitutes one form of knowledge, of research, which is valuable in its own right, and which also resonates with discoveries in other disciplines. The performing arts, using appropriate laboratories and archives, exercising their own skills and talents, make discoveries, which--like those in other disciplines--enrich understanding and make progress possible.

*Education.* Higher education institutions are magnets and filters for students and knowledge seekers, offering a full spectrum of learning environments. Through the classrooms and other resources of higher education institutions, learners expand their own understandings, explore their societies, and prepare for careers and citizenship in a complex world. The mission to educate is the very foundation of America’s colleges and universities. Like other offerings in the academy, the arts provide both subjects for learning and ways to learn. Through the arts, learners develop understandings of their own societies and of other societies. The arts have intrinsic value, as do other disciplines, and they can also illuminate other areas of the curriculum, from history and women’s studies to mathematics and physics, from philosophy to sports. The arts enrich learning methodologies through their standards of observation, discernment and

interpretation; through the uses of movement, sound and images; through their particular histories and their demonstrations of social and cultural development, and through their explorations of ideas.

*Service and Public Engagement.* Colleges and universities have vital working partnerships with other sectors. They explore and advance the applications of knowledge to society through relationships with science and industry, government, public service institutions and other arenas for action in the society. In recent times, campuses have been especially responsive to the concerns of public education and to the needs of the communities that surround them. The performing arts are particularly successful at engaging communities on campus and off, and – in doing so – they express and strengthen their institutions’ goals in public service. Presentations on campuses attract local audiences and arts supporters, and the arts also reach out to communities through off-campus programming. The arts produce revenue and attention for their institutions. Arts faculty members, visiting artists, arts students teach in schools and community programs. Arts facilities on campuses enrich their communities in many ways, sometimes providing resources for local as well as for campus-based and visiting artists. Through the diversity of their offerings, the performing arts encourage linkages between different cultures and different expressive traditions.

The participants in this Assembly combined their experiences as faculty members, higher education and performing arts administrators, scholars, arts producers and presenters, arts advocates and artists, to examine the roles of the academy in the arts, and the contributions of the arts to the academy. They did so with keen awareness of the strong ties between higher education and the arts, but with awareness, as well, of the tensions and difficulties, the need for fuller understanding, between the two sectors. The findings recorded in this report represent the effort of this diverse group of professionals to address the opportunities and the problems facing the academy and the arts as partners.

## **SUSTAINING**

“Sustaining” the performing arts, as the Assembly participants discussed it, refers to the direct and ongoing support that American colleges and universities provide to artists and to artistic endeavor. This support is varied and prevalent, more so than is often recognized, and it is extremely important to the life of the arts in America. Assembly participants specified the forms that support takes, acknowledging its importance and its depth. They also pointed out some of the very deep-seated contradictions or tensions that can exist between the arts and the academy. And they raised questions about how sustaining activities can become more productive – both for the arts and for the academy. They identified the primary vehicles for “sustaining” the arts in higher education as: employment, research support, funding, facilities usage, and the opportunities for partnerships.

**Employment.** American colleges and universities hire artists as faculty members and in staff positions. They employ visiting artists, and bring artists to campus in residencies; they provide commissions, stipends and fees to performing artists. These opportunities are extremely significant to the arts, a sector in the American labor market that is famously undervalued. This Assembly considered specific opportunities and dilemmas in the employment of artists on campuses.

*Promotion and tenure.* The traditional evaluation, advancement, and reward criteria for faculty members can be difficult to fit to the creative work of artists. It is a challenge to document effectively the quality of artistic work within the academic system. There is some contention about whether the promotion and tenure system is even appropriate for working artists or for technical production faculty; and there is reason to think that attention could be given to alternative or adjusted ways of evaluating faculty members in the arts. Many institutions are working actively to accommodate creative artists on their faculties, but others have yet to address these issues.

*Evaluation of artists.* Tenure aside, faculty artists or visiting artists often lack the “data-collectible” proof of their work that makes them competitive for incentives and benefits like sabbaticals and awards, campus-wide recognition or invitations. In some colleges, where research, in the sense of creation of new work, is not a usual or significant criterion for evaluation, working artists have even more difficulty; they have no or even fewer ways to be recognized for their creative efforts.

*New artistic disciplines.* More deliberate approaches are needed to assimilate new artistic disciplines into the fabric of academic life. Design and technical fields in particular are often neglected in hiring, tenure, resource needs, and other considerations on campus (such fields, for instance, as technical direction, stage management, sound recording, instrumental pedagogy).

*Adjunct positions.* The growing dependence on adjunct faculty is observable throughout much of the higher education sector. In the arts, it is particularly observable and problematic. The use of adjunct faculty in the arts (such as members of a community’s professional symphony or theater) can provide a broader range of skills and perspectives to students and the campus, but it can also call into question issues of quality, representation, benefits, and equity.

**Research.** The support of new work, of creativity, is a hallmark of higher education. As with other disciplines – from science to literary studies to urban planning – colleges and universities support research, the creation of new product and new vocabularies in the performing arts. In the arts, as in many other disciplines, such work involves risk-taking and requires a tolerance for failure.

*Supporting research in the arts.* Artistic exploration and creation have not been adequately defined as research, or thoroughly accepted as research. This makes for awkward or incompatible evaluation and review processes by traditional academic measures. The timing and pace of creative production can also be different from those of other disciplines. The quick shifts or sporadic advancement of artistic processes can challenge or even conflict with the standards of some other disciplines.

*Supporting research about the arts.* In recent years, research in areas of cultural policy has become more prevalent. That work, however, is still finding its place in the academy, alongside scholarship in the histories of arts disciplines. More systematic and shared attention to cultural policy research would enrich the academy and would also serve to undergird the arts sector in the same ways that knowledge-building provides foundations for other sectors in the society.

*The arts in the academy.* More can be learned about artistic processes and production in relation to academic modes. There are tensions as well as similarities between the arts and the academy that can be better defined and understood. Some suggest that artistic work can challenge what is comfortable or accepted, a tendency that can be difficult for established institutions to accept.

**Financial support.** Many colleges and universities allocate funds directly from their institutional budgets for the sustaining of the performing arts, including presentation/production of work by students and faculty and by professional artists. Colleges and universities are also able to raise external funds for the arts – in the form of grants, gifts, individual patronage of many kinds. The performing arts on many campuses also generate revenue. These funding and revenue opportunities are extremely important to the work of artists.

*Funding priority.* Leaders in higher education have many choices to make and their budgetary allocations express the values of their institutions. All too often, direct institutional support and efforts to attract grants and gifts are made for the sciences or for sports or for many other priorities and not for the arts.

*Funding Data.* There is little or no data on the percentages of college and university budgets that go to the performing arts. There has also been little or no data collected on other ways that colleges and universities demonstrate support for the arts through space allocation, work study and other forms of student involvement, time for the development of work, and participation in fundraising efforts. More information would greatly help to demonstrate the sustaining of the arts in the academy and to determine the areas of need and of opportunity.

**Facilities.** Throughout higher education, campus facilities are used by artists and by arts organizations. These facilities include performance and rehearsal venues,

technology resources, production resources, classrooms, and other workspaces. This use of facilities is not only important for on-campus activity, but it also makes the arts available to local communities, which may not otherwise experience them.

*Performance constraints.* Space on campus is often one of the most constrained resources; arts performing and support spaces are no exception. Multiple users and conflicting demands can make it difficult to offer or preserve the open, flexible, and extended access required for the production and presentation of the performing arts. The dynamic schedules of visiting artists add to this dilemma.

*Research/creation constraints.* “Space to create” for resident faculty and for pre-professional students can be in particularly short supply, creating tension when visiting artists are seen as displacing their opportunities even further. These constraints and those above require careful scheduling, constant clarification and honest inventories of space available both for presenting and creating artists.

*Student Access.* Space constraints, combined with the needs of professional artists, both faculty and visitors, and those of art students, make access to creative space all but impossible for non-arts majors at many institutions. This closes off meaningful hands-on experience opportunities for the majority of students. The inventories of space and imaginative uses of facilities should be extended to include the needs of non-arts majors and the general student population, in as far as possible.

**Partnerships, Convenings, and Cross-Fertilization.** The arts are also sustained on campus by the quality of the action and ideas around them, and the inspiration the academic environment provides. The performing arts, for instance, are enlivened by the opportunities on a campus to bring students together, to bring audiences together, to encourage cross-disciplinary interaction and exploration, to receive and to stimulate new ideas. In addition, the arts benefit from other partnerships and collaborations that higher education makes possible. The artists and arts organizations on campus, for instance, can forge partnerships with community organizations and schools, with regional and local arts organizations, with other artists and presenters and with educators in the United States and abroad. Clearly, these sustaining relationships can be as valuable to the institutions of higher education as they are to arts practitioners. In relation to campus constituencies, and in relation to nearby communities, the arts provide natural reach and outreach.

*Faculty partnerships.* The promise of cross-disciplinary creation and coursework, or of arts partnering beyond the campus, is often not well realized due to the difficulties of such collaboration, limits on space, lack of available time to build connections and trust, reluctance on the part of faculty members to explore outside their areas of specialization. The encouragement of brokers (including campus presenters) could help such connections; campus leaders could find other ways to provide incentives.

*Student involvement.* When offered beyond the expectations and requirements of the established curriculum, students may not respond to performance opportunities, collaborations and other offerings without exceptional efforts to engage them. Students tend to be overly scheduled, lacking the time to make linkages and to take up opportunities. Campus leaders--students, faculty members, presenters, and administrators—need to find ways to make these opportunities more accessible and more urgent for participation.

*Data.* Studies of the impact and benefits of cross-departmental collaborations, community engagements and other partnerships are seldom undertaken, leading to a lack of evidence and to a lack of measures that might inform future efforts. Initiatives to document collaborative, cross-disciplinary and community-based explorations would help to ground such efforts.

## **TRAINING**

In their discussions of training, Assembly participants recognized that education in the arts takes place throughout colleges and universities, not only in academic courses and programs, but also through the production of art, in informal arts activities both on and off campus, in the audience experience, and in the exposure to the arts for general constituencies, including the audiences and patrons of the future. Participants concentrated however on specific training and teaching responsibilities in the academy: pre-professional artist training; training in arts administration and in research; training in the teaching of the arts; the teaching of non-arts students. Within those discussions, Assembly participants focused primarily on the pre-professional training of performing artists, both in college and university departments and in conservatories.

The high quality of that training is well-recognized. Students from around the world seek their educations in the United States. The growth of artistic activity and professional performing arts organizations across the country has been fueled, in part, by the high quality of this training. The challenge today for many pre-professional training programs is to change and evolve as genres, populations, student interests and qualifications, and art forms themselves change and evolve. Because professional arts training tends to set the standards by which much other arts training is evaluated, it is particularly important that the strengths and limitations of the education of performers and creators be understood.

It is heartening that discussions are underway in the academy not only about how to adapt to changing circumstances in the performing arts, but also about how to position the arts more positively in the general educational experience of all students. However, professional arts educators today must face the challenge of maintaining high technical standards of achievement while meeting this array of needs and demands. This agenda is complicated by the fact that arts programs, already costly enterprises, must consider change at a time when colleges and universities are facing unusual financial constraints.

Among the important subjects in this Assembly's discussions of training and teaching are the following:

**Educating pre-professional arts students.** In music, theater, dance, art, and design, higher education programs and conservatories graduate approximately 40,000 students a year. Employment in the arts has increased in the last decade and a half, but openings for highly trained professionals are few; compensation is low; and many performing artists are underemployed. The training programs face many challenges in keeping up educationally and in preparing their students adequately for the fields.

*Training and career realities.* The match between the training offered to and the career realities encountered by graduates is continually changing. Training is insufficiently expansive in defining what a life in the arts involves; most careers in the arts require flexibility and resourcefulness and entrepreneurial approaches that are not often cultivated within professional arts curricula. The heavy demands of training seem to leave little time for considering such practical aspects of careers in the arts, but students would benefit from learning about fundraising, budgeting, production, and marketing of their art projects, and from improving their writing and speaking skills. Off-campus experience with practicing artists, with arts organizations and with schools, through internships and other programs, can be instructive. Students would also benefit from learning about alternative careers and about the ongoing importance of arts training for those who do choose other careers. Arts professionals, like other professionals, would benefit from continuing career development; certain aspects of self-management and career skills might be more meaningful after a period of work experience. Colleges and universities might assess their artist alumni needs throughout their careers and consider continuing education programs for them. Research is needed that tracks the careers of arts alumni.

*Training and the arts fields.* The training of students in the arts disciplines on campus often does not reflect changes in the arts fields as they are practiced beyond the campus. College, university, and conservatory training is seldom concerned with helping students cultivate new skills and techniques to match changes in art forms. The production of much current work, for instance, is based on new literacies involving text, media, music and digital technologies that are little taught in arts programs. College and university programs and conservatories could do much more to expose students to acts of creation by practicing artists on campus or off, to give them experience in collaboration across the arts. Students depend on faculty members in pre-professional arts training programs, who often have difficulty finding time to develop their own art in new ways or to stay fully aware of the most recent developments in the creative and performing arts. Faculty members in pre-professional arts training programs need time and opportunity to experience change first-hand in order to deal with their students' needs, to experience current art movements and modes, and to develop their own work.

*Training in the arts and broader educational goals.* Colleges and universities traditionally have aimed to graduate good citizens as well as future professionals. Also, it is true that many graduates of professional arts programs pursue careers outside of the arts. Despite these realities, pre-professional arts training leaves little time and little incentive for achievement in the non-arts parts of the academic curriculum. Professional training programs should explore alternative models for balancing or sequencing the competing demands of the professional training regimen and the requirements of a broadly liberal education. Part of the problem may lie in the fact that arts students are often placed in a separate college upon matriculation, committed to pre-professional studies, and involved in a less intense liberal arts course than are other students. At the undergraduate level, in particular, colleges and universities may need to consider how to better serve both disciplinary and broader educational needs.

*Professional training and diversity.* The content and populations of art schools and conservatories are not reflective of the diversity of American society at large. Despite significant and well-meant efforts to achieve greater diversity, many schools have failed to do so either at the faculty level or within their student bodies. Some university arts presenters and professional organizations in the performing arts have given priority to addressing current needs, interests and the diverse cultural traditions of contemporary artists and audiences. Educators can find ways of drawing on the experience of such professionals in addressing the realities of diversity.

**Educating all students.** American colleges and universities have responsibilities to educate broadly in the arts. American higher education institutions, partly because of the pressure for training professionals in the arts on their campuses, are likely to offer inadequate educational opportunities for their non-arts majors. This situation deprives students of the aesthetic and intellectual benefits that study of the arts provide. Further, it sacrifices the opportunity to develop a future generation of arts patrons and arts audiences.

*Teaching constraints.* Faculty specialization, the low faculty–student ratios in arts training programs, limited resources across higher education are factors that add to the difficulty of teaching the arts to the general student body. Some institutions have addressed these issues by assigning graduate students to teach general arts courses. Others are finding ways of encouraging their arts faculties to address these needs; some are even putting arts requirements in place for applicants and for matriculated students. Colleges and universities need to engage in serious internal discussions about the value of education in the arts within the goals of general education.

*Education through experience with the arts and artists.* Arts presenters can provide educational opportunities to the general student body by exposing them to artists and artistic enterprises on campus and by providing contexts for

understanding the work. Presenters should collaborate with faculty members to achieve this, and they should coordinate performances with curricular offerings whenever possible.

**Training arts educators.** Assembly participants stressed the important roles that colleges and universities can play in training arts teachers for work in American schools and for teaching within the arts professions. It seems logical that teaching institutions would provide the society with teachers, but there are barriers that need to be addressed in their efforts to do so.

*Pre-professional training for teaching.* There is a culture or a perception of lower standards for pre-professional students who might be interested in teaching, a perception that those who are not “good enough” to perform are tracked into teaching. In fact, many graduates of pre-professional programs do teach, whether or not they pursue artistic careers, either in classroom settings or in training situations. There is a particularly pressing need to train teachers for arts classrooms in the schools. Faculty and administrators responsible for pre-professional curricula offerings must consider ways of helping their students prepare for teaching in both formal and informal settings and must help them realize the value of teaching in America’s schools and in the broader society.

*K through 12.* It was widely stated that there is a crisis in arts education in K-12 schools, with fewer arts courses being offered and far less instruction in the practice of the arts than in the past. Colleges and universities, it was stated, have responsibilities to strengthen the systems that introduce young learners to the arts, develop their ways of knowing, and encourage creativity and innovation. There were various suggestions for ways in which this might be done, ranging from arts requirements for applicants to colleges and universities, to programs that would put arts students into the public schools in various capacities, to the direct engagement of campus-based educational programs and faculty members in the schools. It was noted that presenters on campus do a great deal to provide arts performances to local audiences, including school children and their teachers. Given the dire state of arts education, arts faculty members and campus presenters need to find more ways to partner with schools.

## **PRESENTING**

American institutions of higher learning in all of their variety produce and present a prodigious amount of performing arts activities; indeed, higher education plays a primary and critical role within the country’s larger performing arts ecology. Much of this activity is the responsibility of professional campus-based presenters, many working from within performing arts centers located on their campuses. It is also the case that a diverse set of other individuals and entities contribute to making arts performances happen on campuses, including faculty members, academic departments and programs, student organizations and administrative offices. Much more needs to be known about

the extent of performing arts activity in the academy and about its concrete meaningfulness to the mission of higher education as well as to the nation's arts sector.

What is known is mostly about the professional presenters on campuses. A recent study reports, for instance, that of the 4,000 colleges and universities in the country, about 2,300 have professional presenters on campus. Many of the 4,700 other presenters who identify themselves as professionals, work outside higher education but interact frequently with colleges and universities. Over fifty years, the presenting field has evolved from the management of facilities and the distribution of performing arts to the curating of public performances and, today, to the initiation of artists' residencies, community-based outreach programs, the development as well as the presentation of artistic work, and program building with scholars and others on campus.

When presenting is incorporated into the whole life of colleges and universities, it is essential to the vitality of the creative campus. The presentation of the performing arts on campuses represents a unique and potent tool for achieving the goals of higher education. Assembly participants acknowledged this and also recognized that progress must be made on several fronts to ensure that performing arts presenting reaches its highest goals and potential.

**The participation of students.** In terms of the performing arts on campus, students are important both as audiences and as presenters. Student constituencies reached by colleges and universities include not only traditional students, but also K through 12 systems, adult, and continuing education learners.

*Student audiences.* It was noted that traditional students, even those in the arts, often represent a small presence at public performance events on campuses. The participants grappled with the question of how to energize and capture student participation. Concrete ideas included the presentation of more art forms that are important to the consciousness and the identity of young people; increasing the social dimensions of participation; presenting arts events in ways that fit into students' increasingly complex and crowded life and work schedules; and integrating arts into the incentives that guide student choices. Many of these ideas, and others to be considered would improve marketing to other audiences as well.

*Student presenting.* It is important to acknowledge the role on many campuses of students and student organizations as presenters – of musical performances, dance and theater performances, film series, and other offerings. Student presenters often enhance the scope of material available to campus communities in ways that complement more formal presenting activities and advance aesthetic and cultural diversity. Professional presenters can benefit from the work of such informal presenters, and they can enhance the efforts of students by working with them.

**The relationship of faculty and administration to presenting.** Ideally, faculty members and administrators should be fully engaged in relating artistic production and performances to their educational and research missions. Furthermore, presenters and

faculty members, especially faculty members in the arts, should be supportive of each other and strive to work together. Tensions often exist on campuses that work to discourage that ideal.

*Responsibilities of presenters.* Presenters can take a variety of initiatives to engage faculty members in the meanings and uses of the arts on campus, and to build trust and confidence. Presenters can actively engage faculty members early in discussions and in planning for performances; they can seek to link presenting activities to course work and to the curriculum; they can solicit faculty input to advise on the quality and fit of work to be presented; they can initiate cultural programming themes and place them centrally in the life of the campus. In general, presenters must be aware of the intellectual currents and interests of faculty members and continually communicate with them.

*Responsibilities of faculty members and administrators.* Presenters and other professional arts resources are often underutilized and undervalued by faculty members on campus, including arts faculty members. Faculty members and administrators could benefit from continual examination of opportunities for active collaboration with arts presenters. Many presenters claim that they achieve greater success in collaborating with humanities, social sciences and science faculty than with those in arts programs. Yet, because presenters can offer exposure to careers and professional contacts in the arts, it is practical for faculty members to encourage students to engage with them and with other professional organizations. Faculty members should be willing to provide relief from curricular demands so that students can enrich their academic programs through exposure to the arts. Consistent and constructive dialogue between arts presenters and faculty members, particularly arts faculty members, is essential.

**Presenting and the broader community.** An important strategy for fulfilling the service mission of colleges and universities is their presentation of stimulating and engaging cultural activities to the members of surrounding communities. It was noted more than once at this Assembly that many communities would lack performance and other cultural opportunities entirely if they were not offered on campuses. Assembly participants emphasized that presenters recognize this responsibility, and that they carry it forward in many ways. Presenters are particularly well positioned to make contributions to the building of partnerships with communities. When the academy draws on the perspectives and expertise of citizens beyond the campus in building partnerships, more powerful and more binding results are produced and better programs are designed. Presenters can be instrumental in building such partnerships.

**Contemporary issues for presenters and their campuses.** A special responsibility for presenters, and for the arts more generally, is to engage audiences both on and off campus in exploring and confronting difficult developments in contemporary existence. Examples include the presenting of programs that address questions of diversity and inter-group relations, war and social conflict, or programs that bring attention to international art, customs, and beliefs. Other examples relate to new methodologies and

new media, and to new collaborative systems. Presenters are finding ways to present contemporary global and societal issues and ideas through the arts, identifying strategies for doing so as they move ahead.

*Integrating and embedding projects on campus.* Presenters are developing longer term relationships with artists. They are fostering theme-based interdisciplinary collaborations across campuses. They are facilitating festivals and other broadly conceived initiatives to ensure that their efforts are deeply situated on the campuses and in the communities they serve. Such projects require greater commitments of time, space and finances, continuous direct interaction with campus populations and continual relationship-building on campus.

*Inter-institutional partnerships and collaborations.* To articulate and address the major issues of our times, presenters are developing formal and informal partnerships with national, state and local agencies-- public and private. Many involve academic institutions working together. New programming opportunities with artists result in shared residencies, joint grants, and major collaborative commissioning projects. These inter-institutional partnerships and collaborations accrue significant benefits to the academy, to communities at large and to artistic communities. This type of activity needs to be supported, further cultivated, researched, and expanded.

*Responding to the changing needs of artists and audiences.* The tastes, interests, and needs of audiences are changing as the demographics of our communities and campuses shift. Moreover, artists are working with ever-evolving styles, techniques, and methods. Presenters must be attuned to these changes and respond actively. Some of the changes specified by Assembly participants are: artists' uses of new technologies and new media and their needs for non-traditional performing spaces; audiences' search for new and diverse offerings reflecting demographic and other societal changes; audience expectations for more intimate art experiences through webcasting, streaming, and through smaller live venues. For presenters, these challenges mean constant education on new creative modes and new forms of presentation.

## CONCLUSIONS

In two and a half days of intensive discussion, participants in this American Assembly found a level of interaction and understanding that seemed unprecedented to many of them. It was frequently said during the Assembly, in very positive terms, that a dialogue of this kind between the two sectors has seldom taken place. From artists and academics alike, from funders and from scholars, from presenters and practitioners, the response to "The Creative Campus" was one of discovery, of shared aspirations and of thinking ahead for positive change. Participants appeared to agree on the following broad issues:

**1. The need for communication.** This Assembly can only be the start of a dialogue. The terms of the discussion, the division into topics (“training,” “sustaining” and “presenting”) could only begin to approximate the true dimensions of the subject. Higher education and the arts are huge and significant sectors in American life, each well defined and well examined in and of themselves. In their combining and connectivities, in the collaborative possibilities they present, in the scope of the meanings and offerings they share, there is much more to be defined and examined than this one colloquy could encompass. Much more conversation needs to follow.

**2. Higher education as patron of the arts.** Several participants at this Assembly made the case that colleges and universities are the most important patrons of the arts in the country. It is surely true that higher education, if it is not the most important patron, stands as an extremely significant patron of the arts in the United States. It is especially notable that colleges and universities provide an extremely high level of support for new and innovative artistic product. In many parts of the country, colleges and universities provide singular venues for witnessing art and most of the opportunities for creating it. Despite the magnitude of the support provided by colleges and universities, they have not – as a sector – embraced their own importance as patrons or understood the ramifications of that support within the broader society. Higher education professionals should articulate and quantify that support, and make the case for it within the context of overall institutional purposes.

**3. The arts as ways of knowing.** Higher education has long claimed responsibility for fields of knowledge – science, medicine, the study of languages and literature, for instance. The academy builds curricula and standards, supports faculty lines, establishes research criteria and resources, recruits talent, raises funds, and preserves, stewards, and takes knowledge public in these fields. The arts, as a particular expressive form of knowledge, give depth and dimension to these goals, but the fullness of this potential has yet to be realized on campuses. There are many ways in which the arts are situated in higher education; strategies and systems can differ as widely as institutions do. But acknowledgement of the importance of the arts as significant fields of endeavor and learning is essential if they are to strengthen and benefit society as other fields do.

**4. The need for information and research.** Throughout the Assembly discussions, the lack of information about the arts and higher education became apparent. There is some information to be found about the numbers of training programs and the numbers of professional presenters on college and university campuses. Beyond the most obvious data, however, there is surprisingly little known about the range and quality of educational offerings in the performing arts at either undergraduate or graduate levels, about the number and specialties of artists who are on faculties or in visiting relationships in the academy, about the careers of graduates and their creative accomplishments, about the arts experience of entering students or about graduation requirements in the arts. Indeed, in any subject area discussed, Assembly participants cited lack of data, of any substantive information about the arts on campus, as one of the major situations to be faced. Beyond data collection and basic fact-finding, participants stressed the importance of basic research in the performing arts as a field of scholarly pursuit, acknowledging that

cultural policy research and study have not yet taken deep root in the academy. Research on the performing arts and on policy issues in the arts is underdeveloped. Faculty members and students in the traditional disciplines are not encouraged to pursue topics in the arts, and the newer fields of cultural policy and cultural research are not sufficiently staffed or funded in the academy. The need for knowledge is acute.

**5. Achieving interactivity and community.** The importance of collaboration in the arts, of interaction through the arts, was stressed time and again. More, perhaps, than is true in other fields, the performing arts are developed by relationships – between artists and audiences, between artists and other artists, between students in training and their faculty mentors, between campus-based arts and the surrounding communities, between higher education and the schools around them. More than most other disciplines, perhaps, the performing arts reflect and represent a diversity of talents, attitudes, traditions, a diversity of populations and a diversity of purposes, which are explored on stages and in classrooms. In various sessions of the Assembly, participants characterized the importance of these relationships. Examples were offered of inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional relationships that the arts make possible. On many campuses, presenters are the professionals who generate such interactivity; they design programs and curate performances; they set expectations and standards in the performing arts, and they inspire cooperation across a “Creative Campus.” Because presenters can do so much to fortify collaborative creativity and connections of these kinds, it was suggested that their expertise could be made available for greater use in higher education.

**6. The importance of creative leadership.** Participants in this Assembly emphasized throughout their discussions the importance of leaders – presidents, provosts and deans, faculty members, board members and alumni – in affirming the value of the performing arts within the missions of their institutions. Institutional leaders can make the case for the arts as fundamental parts of the university. They can attend performances, interact with artists, encourage student and faculty creativity. They can direct research and discretionary resources to the arts. They can advocate for greater government and private support for the arts and for artists, for recognition of the arts, in the national organizations and fora that they influence. College and university leaders can convey the importance of the arts in society as well as in the academy, the importance of creativity in all aspects of human endeavor, and the importance of the arts in maintaining international flows of expression and understanding across societies in the world.

## **NEXT STEPS**

A great deal of thought and research should follow this initial conversation on the arts and higher education. But some ideas were generated at this Assembly that seem possible as immediate next steps.

**1. Leaders in higher education** who have identified the arts as priorities on their campuses should articulate their reasons and their results in speeches and writings. They

should initiate conversations on their campuses and beyond on the opportunities and the tensions that exist between the two sectors, and they should work to identify serious problems facing the arts sector in the nation. A core group of college and university presidents could consider forming an ad hoc caucus that meets on a regular basis to share ideas and to pursue collective goals.

**2. Higher education associations** should work with their members to put the arts on their agendas for discussion and for action.

**3. Faculty members in the arts** should undertake conversations about practical career preparedness in the arts, about the encouragement of live arts performance and work opportunities for their students, and about maximizing the arts education of both arts and non-arts students. Campus leaders should provide incentives for this examination of educational opportunities.

**4. Presenters** should tell their stories of programs that advance campus values and priorities, inspire administrators, faculty members and students to experience performance, build relationships with off-campus communities, or achieve other goals through the arts on campus. Their professional associations should encourage presenters to examine best methods for integrating the arts on campus and for inspiring imagination and creativity in students.

**5. Grantmakers**, especially those with interests in education and/or in the arts, should work with colleges and universities and arts professionals - on campus and in the arts associations – to address these challenges.

**6. Higher education associations and performing arts organizations** should develop plans to collect data and encourage research on the status of the arts in higher education. They should do so by engaging interested academics on college and university campuses, and in other research settings.

**7. Together, higher education leaders, faculty members, students, artists, and presenters** should build high quality, vital arts programs and establish the priority of the arts on campuses. They should work together to reach their communities through the arts. They should collaborate actively with the schools to address the lack of arts education, encouraging both arts participation and arts instruction.

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## **ABOUT THE AMERICAN ASSEMBLY**

The American Assembly was established by Dwight D. Eisenhower at Columbia University in 1950. It holds nonpartisan meetings and publishes authoritative books to illuminate issues of United States policy. The Assembly seeks to provide information, stimulate discussion, and evoke independent conclusions on matters of vital public interest.

An affiliate of Columbia, The Assembly is a national, educational institution incorporated in the State of New York.

## **American Assembly Sessions**

At least two national programs are initiated each year. Authorities are retained to write background papers presenting essential data and defining the main issues of each subject.

A group of men and women representing a broad range of experience, competence, and American leadership meet for several days to discuss the Assembly topic and consider alternatives for national policy.

Most Assemblies follow the same procedure. The background papers are sent to participants in advance of the Assembly. The Assembly meets in small groups generally in four lengthy periods. All groups use the same agenda. At the close of these informal sessions participants adopt in plenary session a final report of findings and recommendations.

Regional, state, and local Assemblies are held following the national session at Arden House. Assemblies have also been held in England, Switzerland, Malaysia, Canada, the Caribbean, South America, Central America, the Philippines, China and Taiwan. Over one hundred sixty institutions have cosponsored one or more Assemblies.

### **Arden House**

The home of The American Assembly and the scene of most national sessions is Arden House, which was given to Columbia University in 1950 by W. Averell Harriman. E. Roland Harriman joined his brother in contributing toward adaptation of the property for conference purposes. The buildings and surrounding land, known as the Harriman Campus of Columbia University, are fifty miles north of New York City.

Arden House is a distinguished conference center. It is self-supporting and operates throughout the year for use by organizations with educational objectives. The American Assembly is a tenant of this Columbia University facility only during Assembly sessions.

## **AMERICAN ASSEMBLY PUBLICATIONS**

1951—U.S.-Western Europe Relationships

1952—Inflation

1953—Economic Security for Americans

1954—The U.S. Stake in the U.N. • The Federal Government Service (revised 1965)

1955—United States Agriculture • The Forty-eight States (State Government)

1956—The Representation of the United States Abroad (revised 1964) • The United States and the Far East (revised 1962)

1957—International Stability and Progress • Atoms for Power

1958—The United States and Africa (revised 1963) • United States Monetary Policy (revised 1964)

1959—Wages, Prices, Profits, and Productivity • The United States and Latin America (revised 1963)

1960—The Federal Government and Higher Education • The Secretary of State

1961—Arms Control: Issues for the Public • Outer Space: Prospects for Man and Society (revised 1968)

1962—Automation and Technological Change • Cultural Affairs and Foreign Relations (revised 1968)

1963—The Population Dilemma (revised 1969) • The United States and the Middle East

1964—The United States and Canada • The Congress and America's Future (rev. 1973)

1965—The Courts, the Public, and the Law Explosion • The United States and Japan (revised 1975)

1966—The United States and the Philippines • State Legislatures in American Politics • A World of Nuclear Powers? • Challenges to Collective Bargaining

1967—The United States and Eastern Europe • Ombudsmen for American Government?

1968—Law in a Changing America • Uses of the Seas • Overcoming World Hunger

1969—Black Economic Development • The States and the Urban Crisis

1970—The Health of Americans • The United States and the Caribbean

1971—The Future of American Transportation • Public Workers and Public Unions

1972—The Future of Foundations • Prisoners in America

1973—The Worker and the Job • Choosing the President

1974—The Good Earth of America • On Understanding Art Museums • Global Companies

1975—Law and the American Future • Women and the American Economy

1976—The Nuclear Power Controversy • Jobs for Americans • Capital for Productivity and Jobs

1977—Ethics of Corporate Conduct • The Performing Arts and American Society

1978—Running the American Corporation • Race for the Presidency

1979—Energy Conservation and Public Policy • Disorders in Higher Education

1980—Youth Employment and Public Policy • The Economy and the President • The Farm and the City • Mexico and the United States

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1999—Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector in a Changing America • The United States and the Americas: A Twenty-First Century View

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2002—Building a More United America • Art, Technology, and Intellectual Property

2003—Workforce Intermediaries for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

2004—The Future of the Accounting Profession • The Creative Campus: The Training, Sustaining, and Presenting of the Performing Arts in American Higher Education

**The Creative Campus: The Training, Sustaining, and Presenting  
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**Background Reading and Contributors**

**Speech to Association of Arts Presenters on 1/13/02**

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**Speech at the Charles Fowler Colloquium 10/21/03**

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**University Arts Programs and Local Communities: A Report on a Pilot Study**

*The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society (Summer 2000)*

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**American Medicis: Training and Patronizing Professional Artists in American Universities**

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**Expanding the Range of Essential Skills of 21st Century Artists**

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**The Postwar University and the Experimental Performing Arts**

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**“Save You’re Money” [sic], Spend Your Art: Cultivating Imaginative Space on Campus**

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**The Creative Campus: How Do We Measure Up?**

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**A Bibliography on Artist Training in American Higher Education**

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